

No consultation, no nothing—that is not the way you would go about putting together a bill that you really want to pass. That is not the way to go about things if you really want to solve our immigration problem.

When Stephen Miller, one of the President's most virulently anti-immigrant advisers, is in the room crafting an immigration plan, it is a surefire failure. The fact that the President is announcing his bill today provides a further bit of irony because, this afternoon, the new Statue of Liberty museum opens. There is no greater symbol of Americans' openness to immigration, of the greatness of America, than the Statue of Liberty, which reaches out to people from every corner of the globe. It towers over nearby Ellis Island, where generations of hopeful strivers shuffled off boats into a new life and into a new country and helped build America into the greatest country in the world.

The White House immigration bill is an insult to our grand tradition of welcoming immigrants from all walks of life, and it is an appropriate metaphor that the President, today, is skipping the opening of the new Statue of Liberty museum, even though he is in New York, simply to go to political fundraisers. He skips real immigration reform and offers a political document, and his trip to New York embodies that ironically and metaphorically.

IRAN

Madam President, on Iran, this has been a chaotic week in the news about the Trump administration's position on Iran. We have gone from reports that the Trump administration's national security team was discussing possible troop deployments—one newspaper, the New York Times, reported 120,000—to coverage now of infighting among the President's staff about the credibility of the threat from Iran.

As usual, the signals indicate chaos coming out of the White House—individuals fighting with each other, no real plan, no real pattern, and no discussion with the American people or with the Congress.

Yesterday, personnel were evacuated from our Embassy in Iraq, and Republicans in Congress have now started to echo the same saber-rattling we typically hear from folks like Ambassador Bolton. At this moment, the only thing that is abundantly clear about the administration's Iran policy is its lack of clarity and the lack of consultation with Congress and with the American people.

Congress has not been fully informed about the intelligence. We have not been properly consulted about the administration's strategy, to the extent one exists.

More importantly, the American people deserve to know what is going on here. They are rightfully skeptical and tired of wars in the Middle East—a skepticism many of my Republican friends across the aisle don't seem to share. We need to get a better public

understanding of what President Trump and Republicans in Congress plan to do.

Yesterday, I called on Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Dunford to testify publicly before the Armed Services Committee so that the American people can at least get an idea of what is being cooked up here. We have learned, sadly, in Iraq, when things are done behind closed doors and the American people aren't fully informed, it can lead to significant foreign policy blunders. So they should come up here—General Dunford, Acting Secretary Shanahan, as well as Secretary Pompeo—and I hope that request will be granted.

HEALTHCARE

Now, Madam President, on healthcare and our friends creating the Senate graveyard, as well as the abortion bill in Alabama, the House has passed over 100 pieces of legislation, many of them with bipartisan support, only to get buried in this graveyard of a Chamber. Leader MCCONNELL, who controls the calendar, prefers to run it as a legislative graveyard.

Let's take healthcare as an example, the No. 1 issue the American people care about. Our colleagues in the House passed a modest bill to protect families from getting charged more if they have a preexisting condition. It should be bipartisan, and most Republicans—or many of the Senate Republicans say they agree with that policy when asked. Well, we have a bill that does it, and what does Leader MCCONNELL do? He just deep-sixes it and sets aside another tombstone for his legislative graveyard.

What about today's House vote on another set of healthcare bills to protect people with preexisting conditions and help them sign up for insurance? What is the fate of those bills in the Senate? Will Leader MCCONNELL sentence them to the same legislative death as all of these other proposals or will Leader MCCONNELL actually allow us to debate something of great importance to the American people, to amend it, and then vote on it? Hopefully it will pass, I believe it would.

What is Leader MCCONNELL afraid of? Is he afraid the American people will get protection from preexisting conditions? Is he afraid he might anger some special interest? Is he afraid he might anger President Trump? We have a higher obligation here.

Instead of debating those crucial pieces of legislation, Leader MCCONNELL has treated the Senate like a rubberstamp for the Trump administration's often radical nominees. For 3 straight weeks, we have only processed nominations, including several judges who are merely unqualified ideologues or merely unqualified.

This matters. The judges we have heard from are narrow. Many have offered bigoted remarks in the past, really bigoted. They are not who a judge should be. A judge is supposed to walk

in the plaintiff's shoes and the defendant's shoes, and then come up with a decision that is governed by existing law. These people are ideologues, many of them stooges and acolytes for the Federalist Society. Now we have in Alabama the most radical anti-abortion bill in the country, inviting a challenge to *Roe v. Wade* in the courts. So the effort by the Republican leader to remake the Federal judiciary into a conservative redoubt has a direct impact on these legal challenges.

If you ask most of the Republican Members in this Chamber "Are you for repealing *Roe v. Wade*, hook, line, and sinker?" they would say, no, they are not or they would mostly be silent; they would be afraid to answer. Then they vote for judges who want to do it, either frontally or by various deep cuts. When our Republican friends vote for these radical, hard-right judges, they are saying they want to repeal *Roe v. Wade*, even if they will not say it directly.

So I say to my colleagues, much as you prefer to remain silent on the Alabama Republican abortion bill, your votes for the hard-right, anti-*Roe* judges speak volumes—volumes. I would say the whole impetus of the Alabama bill is now that we have very conservative, anti-*Roe* judges on the Supreme Court, supported universally by the Members of the other side, they feel they have the boldness to introduce a bill that actually repeals *Roe* instead of just curbing it.

CHINESE TRADE POLICY

Madam President, finally, something good that I think the administration has done. I was pleased for two reasons to see the administration issue an Executive order laying the groundwork for the Commerce Department to ban all purchases of telecommunications equipment from China's State-controlled firms.

First, it was a good decision for our national security. We have long known the threat posed by foreign telecommunications companies, particularly Chinese firms like Huawei and ZTE. The tentacles of the Chinese Government are deep in these two companies. Our intelligence and defense communities, concerned about our own security here in America, have banned the use of Huawei products in the military and labeled its technology a national security threat. That is serious stuff.

So I applaud the decision to protect our networks from potential malware, foreign surveillance, and cyber espionage, and I applaud the administration. They backed off on ZTE 1 year ago, despite the overwhelming support in this Chamber for not letting ZTE sell products, but they are now doing the right thing on Huawei, which is even a greater danger than ZTE.

There is a second reason this is a good decision, aside from national security. It is called reciprocity. In America, we make great products, and time and again, when we make great